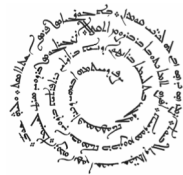


Jacob of Sarug's Homily on the Veil on Moses' Face



Texts from Christian Late Antiquity

20

Series Editor
George Kiraz

TeCLA (Texts from Christian Late Antiquity) is a new series presenting ancient Christian texts both in their original languages and with accompanying contemporary English translations.

The Metrical Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug

General Editor
Sebastian P. Brock

Managing Editor
George A. Kiraz

Fascicle 1

Jacob of Sarug's Homily on the Veil on Moses' Face

Translation and Introduction by
Sebastian P. Brock



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PREFACE TO THE SERIES

Jacob of Sarug, or Jacob the Teacher as he is known in Syriac tradition, can justly be claimed as the finest poet writing in Syriac, after Ephrem. Born at Curtam, on the Euphrates, c.450, he was educated at the famous Persian School in Edessa, and spent most of his subsequent life as a chorepiscopus, though ending up for the last two years of his life as Bishop of Batnan da-Srugh, to the SW of Edessa. The most likely date for his death is November 29th, 521.

Jacob was enormously prolific as a poet, and nearly 400 *mimre*, or verse homilies, come down to us today, though the total number of those he composed is said to have been 763. The verse homily is a distinctively Syriac literary genre, of which Jacob was its most distinguished practitioner, and many of his *mimre* are wonderfully creative re-tellings, full of imagination and insight, of particular biblical topics or episodes. The recurrence of numerous formulaic four-syllable 'building blocks' in these poems, written in twelve-syllable couplets, suggests that Jacob may even have had the gift of oral composition.

The large number of manuscripts (in some cases incorporating several hundred of his *mimre* at a single time), as well as the existence of translations into Arabic and Armenian, attest to his popularity over the centuries in the Middle East. It is also a remarkable fact that he is revered as a saint in both the Syrian Orthodox and the Maronite Church, an astonishing achievement for someone whose birth fell very shortly before the Council of Chalcedon! By contrast, at least until fairly recently, Western scholars have not shown much interest in, or appreciation of, Jacob and his writings,¹ for it is only in the last thirty or forty years that serious attention has begun to be paid to him, with a certain number of new editions, translations and important studies.

¹ The reasons for this are indicated by F. Rilliet, "Une victime du tournant des études syriaques à la fin du XIXe siècle: retrospective sur Jacques de Saroug dans la science occidentale," *Aram* 5 (1993), 465-80.

The main purpose of this new sub-series of TeCLA is to make some of Jacob's writings better known and more accessible. For those *mimre* which have already been published by P. Bedjan in his five-volumes of *Selected Homilies*,² and elsewhere, Bedjan's text has normally simply been taken over, but converted to the West Syriac (serto) script; in the course of time, however, it is hoped to include in the series some of the many *mimre* that still remain unpublished.

Sebastian Brock
Oxford, GB

² P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, I-V (Paris/Leipzig, 1905-10; reprinted Piscataway NJ, 2006, with a sixth volume containing some further *mimre*, and various indexes, including one of translations where available).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Albert, *Juifs* M. Albert, *Jacques de Saroug, Homélie contre les juifs* (PO XXXVIII.1; Turnhout, 1976).
- Bedjan P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, I–V (Paris/Leipzig, 1905–10).
- CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (Leuven).
- LM *Le Muséon* (Louvain).
- OCA Orientalia Christiana Analecta (Rome).
- OCP *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* (Rome).
- OrSyr *L'Orient Syrien* (Paris).
- PO Patrologia Orientalis (Turnhout).
- “Tamar” S.P. Brock, “Jacob of Serugh’s verse homily on Tamar,” *LM* 115 (2002), 279–315.

References to secondary literature are cited by author and short title; for full details see section (b) of the Bibliography of works cited.

INTRODUCTION

INFORMATION ON THIS HOMILY

Homily Title:

Source of Text: *Homiliae selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* edited by Paul Bedjan (Paris-Leipzig 1905, 2nd ed. Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), vol. 3, pp. 283–305. [Homily 79]

Lines: 460

Jacob's verse homily on the Veil of Moses (Exodus 34:33–5) is among his better known *mimre*, having already been translated into German, French, Dutch and English.³

CONTENTS

Jacob opens his *mimro* by saying that he has been asked ‘What is the meaning of the veil on Moses’ face?’ (Exodus 34:33–5), and then proceeds, following his frequent practice, to ask for divine inspiration. In an initial section he explains that Moses (who also represents Prophecy in general) foresaw the coming of God’s Son on earth, but because the Hebrews were prone to lapse into the worship of other gods, the time was not yet ripe to disclose this, and so references to him needed to be veiled, and so Moses and the prophets only speak of him figuratively, through symbols and mysteries (*raẓe*). The advent of Christ, however, eventually provides the hermeneutical key to these symbols, bringing about a full understanding of their meaning.

Jacob then moves on to draw out the hidden meaning of Genesis 2:24, ‘the two (man and woman) shall become one’, for which Paul provides the explanation in Ephesians 5:32. Whereas Paul simply states that he understands the Genesis verse to refer to Christ and the Church, Jacob intro-

³ See under Bickell, Rousseau, Welkenhuysen and van Rompay, and Brock, in section (a) of the Bibliography.

duces the imagery of the wedding feast, employing the more specific terms of Bridegroom and Bride. He goes on to describe how the union between the Father's Beloved, the Bridegroom, and the 'Bride of Light' is brought about through Baptism and the Eucharist. The paradox of a bride who has a slain bridegroom is then explored.

A long section (165–294) explains the whole series of hidden types and symbols of Christ which Moses provides in the course of the Exodus narrative and the Wilderness wanderings, ranging from the crossing of the Red Sea to the Bronze Serpent. At the end Jacob explains that Moses' stammer (Exod 4:10) was itself an indication that his words were veiled.

In the next, fairly brief, section (295–330) Jacob returns to the topic of Moses' veil, and in particular to the radiance of Moses' face (Exodus 34:35), whose source is said to be Christ—hence the need for the veil until the time was ripe for Christ himself to remove it, and thus heal Moses' stammer.

Jacob now returns to the subject of the Bridegroom and bride (331–46). This time his interest focuses on Genesis 2:21, the creation of Eve from the side of Adam, which he explains as prefiguring the creation of the bride (the Church) from the pierced side of Christ (John 19:34). Here the blood and the water which issued from the side of Christ are seen as representing the Mysteries (or, in western terms, Sacraments) of Eucharist and Baptism. Just as Eve is described as the 'mother of all that lives' (Genesis 3:20), so too Baptism (here representing the Church) is the 'mother of life'—but whereas Eve gave birth to mortal children, Baptism gives birth to immortals, 'life' here having the early Syriac sense of 'salvation'.

It is the Crucifixion which brings to completion the explanation of all the mysteries that had hitherto been hidden in prophecy. The Crucifixion affects both this world and Sheol, the timeless world of the dead: in this world the crucified Christ on Golgotha serves, like the Bronze Serpent, as the source of healing for all who gaze upon him, while his final cry on the cross rends open Sheol, whose high walls collapse as did those of Jericho before Joshua.

In a short section (361–86) Jacob juxtaposes Prophecy (represented by Moses) and Virginity (represented by Mary), and explains how both rejoice at the coming of Christ, though for opposite reasons.

The extended final section (387–460) laments how the Jews still read the Old Testament as if the veil had not been lifted by Christ, and they are compared to someone who is still using a lamp, not realising that the sun has risen. The imaginary Jewish reader is then addressed directly, urging him to put away his lamp, open his doors and let in the light of 'the great Sun'.

SUMMARY*A The meaning of Moses' veil (1–84)*

1–10 A request is made to Jacob to explain the meaning of Moses' veil (Exod 34:33).

11–20 Jacob's invocation to Grace for enlightenment.

21–46 The reason for the veil of Moses and of Prophecy is explained.

47–68 How the Spirit speaks through the Prophets.

69–84 The coming of Christ removes the veil.

B The Bridegroom and the Bride of Light (85–164)

85–112 The betrothal of the Son to the Church is foretold in prophecy by Moses (Gen 2:24).

113–132 Paul (Eph 5:31–2) provides the explanation of the passage.

133–138 The union of the Bridegroom and the Bride through Baptism and Eucharist.

139–158 The paradox of the Bride with the slain Bridegroom.

159–164 Moses' words in Gen 2:24 provide the basis for this mystery.

C Other types and symbols provided by Moses (165–294)

165–181 The Passover lamb and the blood on the doorposts (Exod 12:7).

182–209 Our mouths are similarly doorways in need of guarding (Ps 140(141):3); this protection can be provided by signing our lips with the Blood of the Communion Cup.

210–226 Further symbols and their fulfilment: Moses' dividing of the Red Sea;

227–230 The song of Miriam (Exod 15);

231–236 The water of Mara made sweet (Exod 15);

237–240 The 70 palm trees and the 12 springs (Exod 15);

241–242 The provision of Manna (Exod 16);

243–252 The rock which Moses struck (Exod 17);

253–264 The Bronze Serpent (Num 21);

265–278 The various sacrifices, the Bread of the Presence, the High Priest's garments;

279–282 Summary: Moses' use of blood points to Christ making expiation with his own blood.

283–294 Conclusion: All this was spoken by Moses in symbols, as is indicated by his stammer (Exod 4:10).

D The source of the radiance on Moses' face (295–330)

295–302 Moses' request to see God (Exod 33:18).

303–316 The radiance on his face was provided by Christ, whence the need for the veil.

317–330 Christ's advent removed the veil and Moses' tongue is loosened.

E *The Bridegroom's side and Adam's side* (331–346)

331–346 Parallels and contrasts between the Daughter of Light from the side of Christ (John 19:34) and Eve from the side of Adam (Gen 2:24).

F *At the Crucifixion all the figures depicted by Moses are completed* (347–360)

347–352 Christ on Golgotha explains the Bronze Serpent.

353–360 Christ's cry on the Cross overthrows Sheol which falls like Jericho before Joshua.

G *Both Prophecy and Virginity now rejoice* (361–86)

361–386 Prophecy, represented by Moses, and Virginity, represented by Mary, rejoice now that the veil has been lifted.

H *The Jewish reader, who acts as if the veil was still there, is invited to remove it since it is no longer needed* (387–460)

387–406 The Hebrew people continue to read the Old Testament as if the veil over prophecy was still there.

407–418 The Jewish reader is invited to remove the veil from his mind: though the Law was a lamp while the world was in the dark, now the Sun (Mal. 4:2) has arisen.

419–424 The Hebrew is like someone whose door is closed and lamp is lit, not realising that there is daylight outside.

425–456 The Jewish reader is invited to put away his lamp, open his door, and let in the light of 'the great Sun', now that Moses' veil has been lifted.

457–460 Concluding observation.

JACOB'S MAIN SOURCE FOR THE THEME OF MOSES' VEIL

Apart from the biblical texts of Exodus 34 and (to a lesser extent) 2 Corinthians, it seems likely that, as is the case in many of his *mimre*, Jacob's main source for dealing with a particular biblical passage came from Ephrem. Although Aphrahat has a passing reference to Moses' veil,⁴ it was very

⁴ *Demonstration* 21:10, "Moses removed the veil from his face and God spoke with him (Exod 34:34); Jesus removed the veil from the face of the Peoples so that they might hear and receive his teaching (cf. 2 Cor 3:16)." It is quite striking that

probably from the eighth of Ephrem's *Madroshe* on Faith that Jacob drew his inspiration, for the first six verses of this poem are specifically concerned with the veil of Moses:

1. How great was the radiance of Moses,
for none was able to look on him;
the onlookers were unable
to gaze on a mortal:
who then will dare to gaze upon
the Life-giver of all, the Awesome?
If a mere servant's aura has such power,
who then will gaze on his Master?
Mount Sinai, when it saw Him,
issued forth smoke and melted before Him.
2. The circumcised were unable
to look upon the glory of Moses:
the veil ministered between his radiance and the People.
In place of the veil that has grown old,
brightness of living fire surrounds the chariot
lest the Cherubim be affrighted.
But for you, let stillness and silence
be your curtain,
so that you gaze not upon His radiance.
3. No one approached the folds
of that visible veil
to pry into the radiance
of the servant, which resided within it.
When Moses went to look,
all the tribes quaked;
how much more fearful is the search
wherein any account of You lies hidden:
If You just look upon the angel Watchers,
the sky and the highest heavens tremble before You.
4. In the veil of Moses
was Your shining truth hidden;
in his stammer was hidden
Your eloquent instruction:
beneath those two coverings

neither Philo nor Gregory of Nyssa discusses the episode of the veil in their writings devoted to the Life of Moses.

were Your truth and Your utterance hidden.
 You lifted up the covering, You made plain the stammering:
 the whole of You came forth into the open,
 Your truth speaking with a human mouth,
 Your verity revealed to the eye.

5. The veil on Moses' face
 and the stammering of his mouth
 were two covers
 that covered the blind People;
 but to the just You were revealed,
 to those who yearned for Your day. [cf. John 8:56]
 The deniers, too, today are blind, with their eyes covered;
 they stammer and see only dimly,
 blind to Your beauty,
 muzzled in silence in response to Your teaching.

6. He depicted parables to the foolish
 by means of Moses:
 thus two coverings
 were spread over the crucifiers.
 Truth has shone out in the open;
 let us not grope in the dark,
 let us not have (theological) enquiry
 as a second veil.
 Beauty has come out into the open:
 do not compare Him to Adam,
 for He resembles His Father in everything.

Although the two poets treat the theme in very different ways, it would appear that Jacob's *mimro* contains a number of passing allusions to Ephrem; amongst these, the following might be noted:

The veil is removed by Christ: Jacob, line 75; Ephrem verse 5.

The Son has hitherto been concealed: Jacob, lines 25, 41, 361; Ephrem, verses 3, 4.

The term 'account' (*sharbo*) referring to Christ: Jacob, line 26; Ephrem, verse 3

The source of the radiance on Moses' face is the brightness of the Son: Jacob, lines 51, 304, 311; Ephrem, verse 4.

Moses' veil is combined with his stammer: Jacob, lines 284, 293; Ephrem, verse 4.

It is Christ's 'beauty' which is revealed: Jacob, line 452; Ephrem, verse 6.

Moses spoke 'parables' (*pel'oto*): Jacob, lines 46, 82; Ephrem, verse 6.

The term ‘onlookers’: Jacob, lines 8, 306; Ephrem, verse 1.

Although none of these in isolation would be meaningful, the combination of them strongly suggests that they are deliberate allusions on Jacob’s part.

SOME OTHER CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

As can be seen from the Summary, the poem falls into eight main sections (A–H). A and D focus on the reference in Exodus 34 to Moses’ veil, while B and E explain the significance of Genesis 2:24 in the light of Ephesians 5:31–2, and Genesis 2:21 in the light of John 19:34. Section B focuses on how man and woman/the Bride and the Bridegroom become one, while E takes the reader back to the birth of the Bride from the side of the Bridegrooms.

Between the pairs A+B and D+E comes the extended intermediary section C, providing a series of types, drawn mainly from Exodus.

The short section F serves as a summary, both to E, and to all that has gone before, pointing out how all the figures and types in the Old Testament find true explanation when the veil is lifted at the crucifixion. The similarly short section G then provides a set of contrasting parallels between Moses/Prophecy and Mary/Virginity; although the introduction of Mary at this point might seem surprising, her giving virgin birth is implicitly hinted at in section E, alongside the virgin birth-giving of Adam’s side to Eve, and Christ’s side to the Church.

Although Moses’ veil has now been lifted, not everyone is aware of this, and the final section H, the second longest of the whole poem, addresses this matter, taking as its starting Paul’s reference to Moses’ veil in 2 Corinthians 3:13–15, where the Apostle observes how the Jews still continue to read Moses’ books as if the veil was still there.⁵

Not surprisingly, there are several parallels in this section to Jacob’s seven *mimre* against the Jews, in particular to the last of these, where he likewise makes use of the image of someone who continues to use a lamp, unaware that the sun has risen.

⁵ The interpretation of this passage in Paul is far from clear; for various possibilities, see M. E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, I (Edinburgh, 1994), 237–61, esp. 259–61.

Jacob, like Ephrem before him,⁶ sees John 19:34, the piercing of the side of Christ on the cross, as a verse of key importance, providing a link backwards to the side of Adam, whence Eve was 'born', and forwards to the Church, the Bride who is born in the form of the blood and water (representing the Eucharist and Baptism) which issued from the pierced side of Christ (lines 153, 202 333 and especially 338). Instead of the more familiar typological contrast between Eve and Mary, Jacob here, as often elsewhere, prefers to dwell on the parallelism and contrast between Eve and the Church (represented here by Baptism/the Font; lines 345–6). Another passage which shares many features in common in its treatment of John 19:34 is in Homily 53:7, on the Passion:⁷

(Christ) slept on the cross, and Baptism came forth from him.
 The Bridegroom slept, and his side was pierced in his sleep,
 he gave birth to the Bride, as happened with Eve, in Adam, his type.
 The stillness of the sleep of death fell upon him on the cross
 and from him came forth the Mother who gives birth to all spiritual beings:
 the Lord of Adam produced the new Eve in his sleep,
 to serve as Mother of the children of Adam, in Eve's place.
 Water and blood for the fashioning of spiritual babes
 flowed from the side of that Living One who died in order to bring life to
 Adam.
 That Dead One who was alive showed forth a marvel after his death:
 there flowed from him blood, to indicate that he was alive,
 there flowed from him water, to show that he was dead;
 and blood flowed too, to teach that he was alive, though dead.

Finally, it is interesting to observe that the contrast between the womb of Eve and the womb of the baptismal font is brought out in the course of a prayer in the Antiochene baptismal rite:⁸

⁶ Note especially the *Commentary on the Diatessaron* XXI.11: "There came forth blood and water": that is, his Church, which is built on his 'side'. Just as in the case of Adam, his wife was taken from his side. Adam's wife is his 'rib', so our Lord's 'blood' is his Church. From Adam's rib there issued death, from our Lord's rib life." On the central importance given to this verse by early Syriac writers, see Murray, "The lance which pierced the side of Christ," and my "The mysteries hidden in the side of Christ," "Baptismal themes," 329–34, and "The Wedding Feast of Blood."

⁷ Bedjan II, p.589.

⁸ The prayer features in the Maronite rite (ed. A. Mouhanna, OCA 212 [1980]) and in two Syrian Orthodox baptismal services no longer in use, one attributed to

Instead of the womb of Eve which produced children who were mortal and corruptible, may this womb of water produce children who are heavenly, spiritual and immortal.

THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION

For his edition Bedjan employed Vatican Syr. 114 (6th century) and 117 (12th/13th century). To judge from his footnotes, he appears not to have followed one or other of the two manuscripts consistently. The translation below follows Bedjan's printed text, but draws attention in the notes to a few places where he gives what would seem a preferable reading in a footnote (usually this is said to be in the older of the two manuscripts). On the basis of the information provided in Vööbus' *Überlieferung* II, these would appear to be the only manuscripts to contain the *mimro*.

Timothy of Alexandria (edition in *Le Muséon* 83 [1970], 367–431), and the other anonymous (edition in *Parole de l'Orient* 8 [1977/8], 311–46.

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

CONCERNING THE VEIL OVER MOSES' FACE

- 1 One day a man of discernment⁹ enquired of me
 what was the symbolic meaning¹⁰ of the veil upon Exod 34:33
 Moses' face:
 'Why, and for what reason did that great prophet
 cover his face so that the Hebrews should not look
 upon him?
- 5 for what cause did the man who spoke with God Exod 33:11
 stand covered up like a spectacle amongst that great
 People?
 Such is the question, why was a covering put over the
 face
 of that source of prophecy in the presence of onlook-
 ers?
- 10 Explain the reason, if you know it, why
 Moses was veiled, so that none could uncover his
 face?'
 Come,¹¹ O Grace, revealer of divine mysteries,
 may this matter which the discerning have raised be
 spoken of with your aid.
 Come, speak through me, for of my own accord I am
 unable
 to stir up my words in pursuit of expounding the
 truth.
- 15 Through you and by you, O Grace, may I be aroused
 to speak,
 for through revelations you are bountiful in expound-
 ing.

⁹ Jacob often uses *parasha*, referring to the discerning reader, e.g. "Tamar," lines 138, 321.

¹⁰ Literally 'mystery, secret', but the term *raza* is often best rendered by 'symbol' (in the strong sense), or the like. See Kollampampil, *Salvation*, 46–72.

¹¹ As frequently, Jacob prefaces his exposition with an invocation; here he uses the imperative with the verb 'come', reflecting the earliest usage in epicleses (for the wider background, see my *The Holy Spirit*, 88–9 and, in more detail, "Towards a typology").

وَلَا مَعْمَلٌ وَحَاقَ مَعْمَلٌ.

B 79

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حَبِّ مَعَ تَقَمِّعِ اِنَّمَا فَتَاهَا مَعْلَا ۝۱۰۰
وَمِنْهُ اَوَّلُ اَوَّلِ مَعْلَا وَخَافَ مَعْلَا ۝۱۰۱

حُمَا ۝ وَحُمَا ۝ مُمَلَّا ۝ مُبَا ۝ لَلْمَا ۝ قَه ۝ هُمَا ۝

مَفْ أَفْعَمَ مَحْ حُتْمًا وَلَا شَعْوَةً حَمَ ♦

مُتِلَا يَوْمِ نَحْنُ فِي ضَرْحِنَا وَمَعْلَا نَمُ الْكَلَامَ:

مَصْفٍ مَامِ أَسْ مَرُونَا حَصَا وَحَا ❖

حُدِّا ۝ اُوۡا ۝ مَّحْصَدَا ۝ وَصَحَّالَا:

لَحْمٌ أَسْفَدًا وَمِلًّا حَاقِقَةً مَّعَ سُرَّتَا ❖

فَعَمَّ اَوْعَالَ، بَيَّنَّ اَيَّاهُ مُنْهَلًا مُنْهَلًا:

صِفِّ قَدَمًا هَلَا إِيَّاهُ مَعْصِدٌ نَحْلًا أَقْدَمُ ❖

١. لِيُفْعَلَ لِيُفْعَلَ لِيُفْعَلَ لِيُفْعَلَ لِيُفْعَلَ:

وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ حَقٌّ عَلَى النَّاسِ مِنْ مَالٍ أَوْ نَسَمٍ فَلْيَتَنَصَّلْهُمْ»

أَمْ مَلَكٌ خَدٌّ وَأَنَا مَعَهُ وَبَدَلٌ لِّمَا كُفِّرُوا بِنِيعَتِهِ:

أَمَّا صَلَاتُكَ رَبِّ فَعُصَا وَغَنَاتُهَا ❖

حَفَّ لَحْدًا مَقْبَرَةً أَوْ كَفَّنَ

وَحَسْبُنَا اِيْمَانُ خَالِدًا كَصَفْعَةٍ ❖

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1

5

10

15

Come, O Grace, and bring with you the discovery
of what was the reason for that Hebrew's veil.

Exod 34:33

20 It is right that love now should stand as a mediary,
for without love, the hearer has no understanding.¹²

THE PURPOSE OF MOSES' VEIL

This is what the veil on Moses' face symbolizes:
that the words of prophecy are veiled;
the Lord covered Moses' face for this reason,
that it might be a type for prophecy, which is also
veiled.

25 The Father kept the Son in concealment, without
anyone being aware,
but He wished to reveal this matter to the world in
symbolic terms;
He wished to speak about His Beloved One through
prophecy
and so covered up Moses to make him a figure for
prophecy
so that, whenever a prophet arose on earth to speak, it
might be recognized
30 that his words were veiled from those who heard
them,
that there was something hidden, concealed in the
matter of which he spoke,
and for his words to be understood, it requires an
awareness of¹³ what they symbolize.
Thus He cried out in the prophet, 'I have a mystery, I
have a mystery', Isa 24:16
so that the world might be aware that the prophecy
contained mysteries:

35 the words and the actions of prophecy are veiled;

¹² Jacob likewise stresses love as a prerequisite for reading Scripture in "Tamar," lines 137–40: "In the case of all the mystery-filled narratives of the Only-Begotten/ it is right to listen with great love, O discerning (reader),/ for if love does not open the gate of your ear/ then there is no passage to your hearing for the words."

¹³ Lit. "sons of (= sharers in) the mystery."

20
 25
 30
 35

it hides its contents in parables so that they might not
be recognized;

it devises figures and utters its words as if in secret
so that the world might not become openly aware of
the Son of God.

If the People¹⁴ multiplied idols and filled the world
with all kinds of gods,

40 without being aware that God had a Son,
how much more would they have done so had they
been aware of the hidden Son;
this would have been an excuse for them to multiply
idols on earth!¹⁵

The Father thus provided no such excuse for multi-
plying idols on earth,
crying out to them daily, 'The Lord is one, the Lord is Deut 6:4
one,'¹⁶

45 while his Son was announced in prophecy,
being spoken of in parables and figures.

THE SPIRIT SPEAKS THROUGH THE PROPHETS

Through the Spirit, in hidden and hinting fashion,
the prophets brought news to the entire world of the
Son in secret,

50 and the veil which was on Moses' face was spread Exod 34:33
over their words whenever they spoke of the Only-
Begotten.

The radiance of Moses was in fact Christ shining in Exod 34:35
him

but He was veiled from the Hebrews so that they 2 Cor 3:13
should not behold Him,

for the Father knew that the People were not worthy
to see the Son, and so with the veil He covered Him
from them.

¹⁴ Early Syriac writers regularly distinguish between the (Israelite) People (Nation) and the (gentile) Peoples (Nations): see especially Murray, *Symbols*, 41–68.

¹⁵ Possibly an allusion to the episode of the Golden Calf (Exod 32).

¹⁶ Similarly in Albert, *Juifs*, IV, 47. This suggests that Jacob was aware of the Jewish recital of the *Shema*.

۞ قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ
 الَّذِي لَا يَأْخُذُ بِهِ نَوْمٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي لَا يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا شَيْءٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي يُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ
 وَبِالْعَرْشِ شَدِيدٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي لَا يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا شَيْءٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي يُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ
 وَبِالْعَرْشِ شَدِيدٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي لَا يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا شَيْءٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي يُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ
 وَبِالْعَرْشِ شَدِيدٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي لَا يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا شَيْءٌ ۚ
 الَّذِي يُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ
 وَبِالْعَرْشِ شَدِيدٌ ۚ

- 55 The prophets were God's 'friends' and shared in His
 mysteries,
 and so He hinted to them in parables concerning His
 Beloved One.
 He covered up Moses so that the world might learn by
 that veil
 the way and manner in which prophecy too is veiled.¹⁷
 The whole Old Testament is veiled after the fashion
 of Moses:
- 60 in him all the prophetic books are depicted;
 within that veil¹⁸ which lies over the Scriptures
 there sits resplendent Christ as judge.
 All the prophets veiled every reference to Him in their
 books
 so that He might not be spoken of openly in the pres-
 ence of outsiders.
- 65 Moses was veiled, so which prophet will uncover His
 face?
 They looked upon Him, and they veiled their words;
 they covered over their references to Him, spreading
 over a veil as they spoke,
 so as not to deviate from the example of the great
 Moses.

Jesus, the Light in the Scriptures

- 70 Jesus is a radiant light in the Scriptures, and so
 a veil is thrown over Him so that He might be hidden
 from the sight of spectators.
 That veil of Moses openly cries out to the entire world
 that the words in the Scriptures are likewise veiled:
 Moses is the model of all that is uttered in prophecy,
 providing a type for the veiled character of the Old
 Testament.

¹⁷ Lines 51–8 are more or less recapitulated in 303–16.

¹⁸ Instead of the biblical term *shushbeṭa*, Jacob here employs the Latin loan word *velum* (by way of Greek); similarly in lines 70, 83, 90. 114, 232; likewise of Moses' veil in Bedjan I, p.48.

- 55 وَهَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَمَنْ يُكْفِرْ لَكُمْ يُكْفِرْ لَكُمْ
 وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَمَنْ يُكْفِرْ لَكُمْ
 يُكْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ
 وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ
 هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ
 كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ
 60 وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ
 لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ
 هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ
 كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ
 65 وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ
 لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ
 هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ
 كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ
 70 وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ
 لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ
 هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ
 كَذِبُكُمْ وَتَقُولُ لَهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ كَذِبُكُمْ

- 75 That veil was only removed with our Lord¹⁹
 in whom all mysteries were explained to the entire
 world.
 The Son of God came and uncovered Moses' face
 that had been covered, with no one knowing what he
 was saying.
 The New Testament entered and gave illumination to
 the Old,
 80 and the world became aware of all its words in their
 unveiled form.
 Our Lord shone out as the sun in the world, and all
 received light:
 symbols and figures and parables, all were explained.
 The veil that was placed on the face of the Scriptures
 was removed
 and the world now sees openly the Son of God.

THE BRIDE AND THE BRIDEGROOM

- 85 The hidden Father betrothed a bride to His Only-
 Begotten,
 having instructed her through prophecy in a symbolic
 manner.
 In His love He built a great palace for the Bride of
 Light²⁰
 and depicted the Bridegroom²¹ in various ways in her
 royal home.
 Moses entered in and, like a skilled artist, described

¹⁹ Similarly in Albert, *Juifs*, III, lines 31–2, “Christ uncovered the face of the words of prophecy, illuminating them, and removing the veil at his crucifixion.”

²⁰ Thus also 227 (and elsewhere in Jacob, e.g. I, p.173, 186; II, 374, 588 etc.); this particular term does not yet feature in Ephrem, who instead uses *kallat malka* (e.g. *H. on Resurrection* 3:1). Later on in the *mimro* the Church is called “Daughter of Day” (133) and “Daughter of Light” (338); this last already occurs in the Acts of Thomas (ed. Wright, p.176). For further references in Jacob, see Bou Mansour, *Théologie*, p.141. The terms may be applied to either the Church or to Mary. For Jacob’s love of bridal imagery, see Kollamparampil, *Salvation*, 229–40.

²¹ Christ as ‘Bridegroom’ already features in the Acts of Thomas (ed. Wright, 182, 295), Aphrahat (*Dem.* VI.1, XIV.39), and Ephrem (*against Heresies* 24:4, 47:3 etc.).

- 75
 وَمَا كُنَّا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَأْتِيهِمْ خَفَاةً يُبْصِرُونَ
 إِنَّهُمْ يَخُصَّمُونَ وَيُجَاجِلُونَ فِي الذِّكْرِ
 وَتُتَوَلَّى السُّنُوفُ أُولَئِكَ فَهُمْ يُعْجَبُونَ
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٠
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨١
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٢
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٣
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٤
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٥
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٦
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٧
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٨
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٨٩
 وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتُفَكَّرُ فِيهِ لَعَلَّ
 تَتَّقُونَ ۝ ٩٠

- 90 the Bridegroom and the bride, and then covered the
great picture with a veil.
He put in his writings that 'A man should leave his Gen. 2:24
father and mother
and cleave to his wife so that the two of them might
be completely one.'
The prophet Moses introduced the account of the
man with his wife
so that through them Christ and His Church might be
spoken of.
- 95 With the exalted²² eye of prophecy Moses beheld
Christ,
and how He and His Church would be one in the wa-
ters of baptism.
He saw Him putting her on in the virgin womb
and her putting on Him in the baptismal water:²³
Bridegroom and bride are spiritually perfected as one,
100 and it was concerning them that Moses wrote "The Gen 2:24
two shall be one.'
But he supposed that the People were not capable of
grasping this great mystery,
and so he said it of a man and his wife that "The two
shall be one.'
The veiled Moses beheld Christ, and called Him
'man',
he beheld the Church too, and called her 'woman', as
a device:
- 105 to avoid speaking of the matter openly before the He-
brews

²² Bedjan's text has 'great', but he cites *ramta*, 'exalted', as the reading of the older manuscript, which seems preferable here.

²³ Jacob, like other early Syriac writers, is very fond of expressing theological concepts by means of clothing imagery; for this, see my "Clothing metaphors" and "The Robe of Glory."

- he covered up his words by various means, hiding
 them from outsiders.²⁴
 And so he painted a picture inside the chamber of the
 royal Bridegroom;²⁵
 he called them 'man and woman', although he was
 aware
 that the one was Christ and the other the Church,
 both being veiled,
 110 and they were announced as 'man and his wife' simply
 as a device.²⁶
 And because there was that veil spread out,
 no one knew what the great picture was, or whom it
 depicted.
 After the Wedding Feast Paul entered in and beheld
 the veil lying there, and he seized it²⁷ and removed it
 from the fair couple.
 115 Thus did he uncover and reveal to the entire world
 Christ and His Church
 whom the prophet Moses²⁸ had depicted in his
 prophecy.
 The Apostle trembled and cried out 'How great is this Eph 5:31–2
 mystery,'
 and began to show what the covered picture was:
 'In those called "man and wife" in prophecy
 120 I recognize Christ and His Church, the two being
 one'.
 The veil on Moses' face has now been removed:
 let everyone come and behold the beauties that never
 weary;

²⁴ Much of lines 89–106 is to be found word for word in Hom. 80 (Bedjan III, 309–10), "On the Mysteries and Types of Christ." In fact this homily is largely a cento built up from lines drawn from different *mimre*: see Konat, "A metrical homily."

²⁵ The christological title *ḥatna malka* is not found in earlier writers, but Jacob employs in several times (e.g. Bedjan I, 33, 168, 186 II, p.297 etc.).

²⁶ Instead of 'as a device' the older manuscript has 'for all onlookers.'

²⁷ One would expect the *etpa* "al for the sense "seize hold of," required here, but this goes against the metre.

²⁸ The older manuscript has 'the wondrous (*tmiha*) Moses'.

- the great mystery that was veiled has now come out
into the open.
Let the wedding feast rejoice in the Bridegroom and
the bride, so beautiful.
- 125 He gave Himself to her, and was born of the daughter
of destitute parents;²⁹
He made her His own, and she is linked to Him and
rejoices with Him.
He came down to the depths and raised up the lowly
maid to the height,
for they are one, and where He is, there is she with
Him.
The mighty Paul, that great profundity among the
Apostles,
- 130 expounded the mystery, which is now spoken of
clearly.
The great beauty that had been veiled has now come
out into the open,
and all the peoples of the world behold its luminous
character.
The Betrothed made the Daughter of Day to enter a
new womb³⁰
and the tested waters of baptism³¹ were in labour and Judg 7:1–7
gave rebirth to her.
- 135 He rested in the water and invited her: she went
down, clothed herself (in Him), and ascended;
(in the Eucharist) she received Him, and so Moses'
words, that "The two shall be one" were estab-
lished.

²⁹ The description of Mary as *ba(r)t meskine* is also found in Albert, *Juifs*, I, 182, and earlier in the anonymous *Sughitbo* 2 (verses 2 and 13) in Beck, *Hymnen de Nativitate*, and in the *Sughitbo* on Mary and Joseph (verse 2); translations of both these are given in my *Bride of Light*, 75, 77, 119).

³⁰ For the font as a new "womb," see my *The Holy Spirit*, 102–5, and "Baptismal themes."

³¹ The term 'tested' (*bbire*) is taken from the episode of Gideon's selection of warriors in Judges 7, a passage already used in the context of baptism in Aphrahat, *Dem.* VII.19–22; Jacob uses the phrase *mayya bbire* (not found in Aphrahat) a number of times in a baptismal context, e.g. Bedjan I, 168, 201, 210.

- يَوْمَ كَذَبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَالَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا: ﴿١٢٥﴾
 تَبَايَعُوا عَلَى كَذِبِهِمْ وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ: ﴿١٢٦﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٢٧﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٢٨﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٢٩﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣٠﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣١﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣٢﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣٣﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣٤﴾
 وَكَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ: ﴿١٣٥﴾

From the water comes the chaste and holy union
of bride and Bridegroom, united in a single spirit in
baptism.

Women are not joined to their husbands in the same
way

140 as the Church is joined with the Son of God.

What bridegroom died for his bride, apart from our
Lord?

What bride sought out a slain man to be her hus-
band?³²

Who, from the world's beginning, ever gave his blood
as the bride price,³³

apart from the Crucified One,³⁴ who sealed the mar-
riage with His wounds?

145 Who has ever seen a corpse placed in the midst of the
wedding feast,

with the bride embracing it, expecting to be com-
forted by it?

At what wedding, apart from this, did they break
the body of the bridegroom for the guests, in place of
food?

Wives are separated from their husbands by death,

150 but this bride is joined to her Beloved by death!

He died on the Cross and gave His Body to the bride
made glorious,

and she plucks and eats it every day at His table;³⁵

He opened up His side and mixed His cup with holy
blood,

³² Elsewhere (Bedjan II, 639–40) Jacob speaks of the *batna qtila*, ‘the slain Bridegroom’. For some parallels to the following lines, see my “The Wedding Feast of Blood.”

³³ Although the Greek loanword (from *phorne*) normally means “dowry” (provided by the bride), it must clearly be “bride price” here; cf. “Wedding Feast of Blood,” p.126 with note 15.

³⁴ Though *zqipha* normally means “cross,” Jacob sometimes uses it in the sense of “crucified one,” as clearly here (likewise in line 317).

³⁵ Jacob clearly alludes to the practice of daily Communion; for this, see R. Taft, “The frequency of the Eucharist throughout history,” and “Changing rhythms,” esp. 434–55.

giving it to her to drink so that she might forget her many idols. John 19:34

155 She anointed Him with oil, she put Him on in the water, she consumed Him in the Bread,
she drank Him in the Wine, so that the world might know that the two of them are one.

He died on the Cross, but she does not exchange Him for another:

she is full of love for His death, knowing that from it she has life.

160 Man and his wife were the basis for this mystery, they served as a picture and type and image for the reality.

By means of them Moses uttered this great mystery, covering up and preserving it under a veil so that it should not be laid bare.

The great Apostle uncovered its beauty and showed it to the world,

and so Moses' words, 'The two shall be one' stood illumined. Gen 2:24

THE PASSOVER LAMB, THE TYPE OF CHRIST

165 Moses spoke of the Son of God in various ways, but because they were veiled, no one knew of what he was speaking.

He depicted Him in the lamb which he introduced as being bound, to serve as a type Exod 12:3ff

for the Son of God, whom the People bound at the great judgment.

(Moses) slaughtered the lamb and sprinkled its blood on their doors Exod 12:13

170 so that the angel of death might not enter to take their firstborn.

He dipped a sprig of hyssop in its blood and sprinkled the doors, Exod 12:22

but no one save he knew what he was doing.

He sprinkled the lintels and doorposts in symbolic fashion, Exod 12:17

- 155 هَيَّوْكَ كُنْ وَأَعْلَا هَلْ هَذَا فَلْتَمَنَ وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 حَصَصْنَا مَعَهُ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا حَصَصْنَا إِيَّاهُ
 حَصَصْنَا مَعَهُ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 160 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 165 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 170 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ
 هَيَّوْكَ هَيَّوْكَ هَلْ هَذَا حَصَصْنَا وَهَيَّيْلًا هَيَّوْكَ

- 175 sideways and up and down,³⁶ thus depicting
 the Cross on the doors, and preventing death from
 entering in,
 at the same time concealing the mystery so that the
 People might not be aware.
 This is clear, and just by groping, a blind man would
 recognize it,
 for the blood of a lamb cannot ward off death:
 had the slayer of the firstborn not seen there the de-
 picture of God's Son,
 180 he would not have passed by their doors.
 It is Christ's blood that was spoken of in the blood of
 the lamb.
 A great mystery was expounded in this small matter:
 Moses has taught you, by the blood of the lamb which
 he sprinkled on the doors,
 that you should moisten your lips with the Blood of
 the Son each day.
 185 For the mouth is the gate which emits
 both songs and words, both praise and abuse, of vari-
 ous kinds,
 and David asked that there should stand a guard over
 it.
 Who is it who stands guard for him who asks, if not
 the Crucified One?
 'Set a guard, Lord, over my mouth,' requested David. Ps 140
 (141):3
 190 It is the Cross which guards the gate of the mouth
 from Satan:
 the Cross stood above the doors of the members of
 the People
 and preserved them from the slayer of the firstborn
 on earth.
 Do you now take the Blood of God's Son
 and trace with your fingers the sign of the Cross upon
 your lips;

³⁶ Not in Exodus, but Jacob may possibly be thinking of the *tau* (cross shaped in the palaeo-Hebrew script) in Ezekiel 9:4 (Peshitta, *rushma*).

[illegible]

- 195 make it the guardian of your mouth, and be confident
in its sure effect;
then the destroyer, on seeing it, will not draw near to
you.
If His symbol could stand at the door and guard them,
how much more can He Himself guard the person
who seeks Him?
Receive from Divinity's Cup the Blood on your lips
200 and it will prove a sure door-keeper for you.
The doors of the People were sealed with the blood of
the lamb,
do you seal your door with the Blood from the side of John 19:34
God's Son.
Dye your tongue, your lips, your mind too,
in the Blood of your Lord, and He will guard you
from harm.
- 205 Seek each day for this Guardian for your mouth and
lips,
earn Him with tears, and He will preserve you un- Ps 120
sleepingly. (121):4
The Blood of the slain Christ is sprinkled on people's
mouths:
Moses saw this, and depicted it in the blood of the
lamb.

THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA AND THE WILDERNESS JOURNEY

- 210 The scribes read in Moses' writings about his deeds
and there was none capable of expounding these
symbols:
beneath the veil they were kept from onlookers,
so that they might not be known until the epiphany of
the Only-Begotten.
Moses struck the sea with his rod, dividing it for the Exod 14:16,
great People, 21
and by that wondrous crossing he depicted the Cross.
- 215 Who has ever been able to divide the sea in two with a
rod,
apart from Moses, who bore the symbol of the Son of
God?

- 195 حَبُّ نُلْهَ وَأَحْفَهْ مَبِّ ٥ اَلْاَصْلَابُ هَئِنَا:
 ٥ مَسْحُكُنَا مَعَا وَمُرَا كَه لَا مُنَد حَبُّ
 ٥ اَوَّه ٥ اَوَّوَر ٥ مَم حَا اَوَّوَا ٥ نُلْهَ اُنْهَ:
 مَنُوه ٥ اَوَّوَا مَعَا مَعَل نُلْهَ; كَبُحَا كَه
 وَمَا حَقَّقَهُ اَمَر مَد مَع مَصْنَع ٥ اَكْه ٥ اَل:
 ٥ اَوَّه ٥ اَوَّوَا حَبُّ نُلْهَ; اَوَّوَا ٥ مَصْنَع هَئِنَا: 200
 كَبُحَا ٥ اَمَدَا اَوَّوَا ٥ مَعَا مَدَامَص ٥ اَوَّه:
 مَدَام اَي اَوَّوَا حَبُّ مَعَا ٥ اَوَّوَا ٥ اَكْه ٥ اَل:
 رَحْمَ « حَمَب اَو حَقَّقَهُ اَمَر اَو اَوَّوَا:
 كَبُحَه ٥ مَدَم ٥ اَوَّه ٥ نُلْهَ; حَبُّ مَع كَتَعْلَا:
 حَبُّ نُلْهَ وَأَحْفَهْ مَبِّ مَكْه ٥ حَقَّقَهُ اَمَر: 205
 حَبُّقَدَا اَكْه ٥ مَم ٥ مَصْنَع; حَبُّ كَب لَا وَمَبِّ
 وَمَد ٥ مَكْلَا اَل اَكْس ٥ وَصَف حَا فَهَمْتَه ٥:
 ٥ اَوَّه مَد مَعَا ٥ كَبُحَه ٥ اَمَدَا حَبُّ كَه رَحْمَا
 ٥ مَم ٥ مَصْنَع ٥ حَقَّقَهُ مَد مَعَا ٥ حَبُّقَدَا:
 210 هَلَا اِنْع اَوَّوَر ٥ اَكْه اَوَّوَا مَعَم اُنْهَ:
 اَمَد مَعَا مَكْلَا ٥ اَوَّه ٥ اَوَّوَا مَع مَرْتَا:
 وَلَا تَلَبَّحْ حَبُّ مَعَا حَبُّشَه ٥ مَسْبُتَا:
 مَعَا ٥ اَوَّوَا حَبُّقَدَا ٥ مَعَم مَعَا حَبُّقَدَا ٥ اَل:
 ٥ اَوَّوَا حَبُّقَدَا ٥ مَد مَكْلَا ٥ اَوَّوَا:
 مَعَم مَعَم مَعَم مَعَم مَعَا حَبُّقَدَا ٥ مَعَم مَعَم:
 215 اَلَا مَعَم ٥ اَوَّوَا ٥ اَوَّوَا ٥ اَكْه ٥ اَل:

- He rent the sea, and thus showed how the Son of God Ps 78:13
 would rend Sheol, and provide a passage for the dead
 who have received life.
 The Hebrews made their passage across, and the figure
 was portrayed for that great passage
 220 when the Son would lead (us) humans across to His
 Begetter.
 The Egyptians were drowned and were a type for the
 foul demons
 whom the Son of God drowns in the depths.
 He depicted Pharaoh hardened like Leviathan, Ps 74:14
 and made him a model of the devil whom He crushed
 by His Cross.
 225 He went up from the sea leading the sheep, with the
 wolf dead,
 thus signifying the Shepherd who brought His sheep John 10:11
 from captivity.
 Moses then gloriously depicted the Bride of Light
 who sang praise, once delivered from persecutors:
 the bands of young girls shout out with their tambou- Exod 15:20
 rines,
 230 thus delineating a picture for festal gatherings and
 their joyful sounds.
 He came to Mara,³⁷ and a mystery held him back from Exod 15:23
 drinking
 the bad water, before it had been made sweet by the
 crucifixion;
 the Lord showed him the wood, and he cast it into the Exod 15:25
 bad water
 which at once became sweet, providing a parable of
 the Son of God.
 235 The Cross made sweet those who were bitter,
 it acted as leaven, mixing in them, thus restoring them. cf. Matt
 13:33

³⁷ Jacob uses the Peshitta's form *Mart*.

294

أَوِ يَهُودَ نَحْنُ مُنَافِقُونَ ۚ وَاتَّبَعُوا لِمَ كَفَرَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ فَسُيِّئَ لَهُمُ الْقَدَرُ ۚ

ح: اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْ اُحِبُّ اَحَقَّتْ لِيْ رِسَالَتُكَ ۖ

حَبِّهِ حَبُّنَا ۖ لَوْلَا نَحْنُ رَحْمَةُ حَبْنَا ۖ وَحَا:

يُؤْتِيهِمُ الْحَيَاةَ ۖ وَهُوَ يُعْطِيهِمْ أَسْرَارًا ۖ وَمَا هُمْ بِبَالِغٍ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۝

لَحْدٌ مَرْوًى ۝ ۝ ۝ لَهْفًا جَعَلًا لَتَقَا:

بِحَسْبِ مَا مَلَاحِظُوهُ مَلِاحَظًا

وَقَدْ حَقَّقْنَا فِي هَذِهِ الْأَعْيُنِ مَا نَزَّلَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ:

وَحَبِّهِ وَمَا لَاقِفُنَا وَمِنْ حَرْفِهِ ❖

مَلِكٌ مِّنْ مَّالِكِ الْعَزِيزِ

وَمَعَهُ كُنُوزٌ مَّا وُأْمَرُ خُتَمٌ مَّعَ خُتْمًا ❖

أُتِي بِهِمْ فَحَصَّ مَعَهُمَا هُوَ وَجُنُودُ حَكِيمٍ تَعَالَى:

وَمِنْهَا مَعْصَا مَا وَافَقَهُ مَعَهُ ۖ وَهَٰذَا

مَحْصُهُ قَصْرًا، وَبَلْتَضًا حَفْلَتُهُمْ:

[illegible]

صَلِّا بِمَدْرَإٍ وَبِوَكْمَةٍ وَأُورْشَلِيمَ وَلَا تَعْدَا يَوْمًا:

مَتَا حَتَّمَا حِمْمَا، وَحُصْمَا حَرِصْمَا ❖

مَعَهُ مِنْهُمَا صُفْهُمَا ۚ وَكَدَّ حَصْنًا حَتْمًا:

وَقَدْ جَاءَ فِي هَذِهِ الْفُرْقَانِ الْكَلَامُ

وَمِمَّا مَكَدَ لِحِثْتِنَا، وَمِنْهُ : ٥٥٥ :

سَمِعْنَا بِإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ مُسْكِرًا تَصَدَّعُونَ، هَٰلَا أَفْئِدَةٌ

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At every stage and milestone³⁸ that Moses passed
throughout his entire journey he depicted an image of
God's Son.

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------------------|
| 240 | At the seventy palms and twelve springs
he laid out the number of the apostles and disciples. | Exod 15:27
Luke 6:13,
10:1 |
| | He threw down to the synagogue splendid bread from
the clouds,
prefiguring that the Food of Life would descend to
the world. | Exod 16:14 |
| | He struck the rock, and it gave forth streaming rivers,
depicting Christ who has caused life to flow into the
entire world, ³⁹ | Exod 17:5ff
John 7:38 |
| 245 | for that rock was Christ, as it is written,
and through Him and His symbol the Hebrews, all
unawares, received life. | 1 Cor 10:4 |
| | He is the rock that was not hewn with hands
and the rock that gave water to the People who were
exhausted, | Dan 2:34
Ps 107:5 |
| | He is the rock which the builders rejected and refused
to accept; | Mark 12:10,
Acts 4:11 |
| 250 | He is the rock that shattered the many idols of the
land. | cf. Ezek
30:13 |
| | Moses spoke with the hard rock, and it gave him wa-
ter,
designating by the rock Christ the Rock who came on
earth. | |

THE BRONZE SERPENT⁴⁰ AND OTHER TYPES

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| He set up an image of His crucifixion in the bronze
serpent he made,
with which he healed, once they had looked on it, | Num 21:8;
John 3:14 |
|--|------------------------|

³⁸ Jacob makes frequent use of these terms: see Rilliet, "La métaphore du chemin," and Bou Mansour, *Théologie*, II, 60–64.

³⁹ For the christological interpretation of John 7:38, according to which the 'side' is that of Christ, rather than that of the believer, see Murray, *Symbols*, p.213, with n.1.

⁴⁰ Jacob devotes a whole *mimro* to this (Hom. 4, Bedjan I, 47–67).

- 255 —all those of his people who had been bitten by ser-
pents,
restoring them to health after their bites from snakes.
He made the bronze serpent and set it on high in the
camp,
and whoever had been bitten looked upon it and was
healed.
He depicted Golgotha with the Cross of the Son of
God,
260 showing how His body gives healing to bodies that
have been wounded:
all who have been bitten by the serpent who slew
Adam,
let each look on the Cross, and it will heal him with-
out medicines.
Who knew what Moses was performing then
by this prophetic action of his, concealed from the
spectators?
265 He further depicted the Son with his perfect sacrifices
and offerings,
with the whole burnt sacrifices that he offered up,
with the two sparrows, one of which he killed, the Lev 14:4–7
other he let fly off,⁴¹
and again with the heifer⁴² that was slaughtered for Deut
purification, 21:4(?);
Num 19:2–3
with the bulls and the sheep, and the pigeons and Lev 1
doves,
270 with the Bread of the Presence that never left the ta- Exod 25:30
ble,

⁴¹ Jacob's Hom. 76 (Bedjan III, 224–42) is on these Two Sparrows; French translation by F. Graffin, "Mimro."

⁴² The only occurrence of *'gelta* in the Peshitta Pentateuch is Deut 21:4, but it would seem more likely that Jacob is referring to Num 19:2–3 (where the Peshitta has *tavrta*), since he mentions 'purification'. Line 405 also has *'gelta*, but mention of burning again suggests that the reference is to the Red Heifer of Num 19. The Red Heifer is the subject of Jacob's Hom. 77 (ed. Bedjan III, 242–59), translated by D. Lane, "On the Red Heifer."

- 255 חֵם מִנֶּה יִהְיֶה כֹּל וְאֵלֶּיךָ מִן מִנְחָה:
 מִסִּימָן יִהְיֶה חֵם מִן תְּמִלָּה וְשִׁטָּה *
 חֵם יִהְיֶה מִן מִנְחָה חֵם מִן חֵם מִנְחָה:
 עֲלֵה וְנִסְּךָ מִן יִהְיֶה חֵם מִנְחָה יִהְיֶה *
 נִזְכָּר מִן חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 260 מִן חֵם מִסִּימָן חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 כֹּל וְאֵלֶּיךָ מִן מִנְחָה וְנִסְּךָ לְיָמֶיךָ:
 שֶׁוּ וְנִסְּךָ חֵם מִנְחָה חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם מִן חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 265 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:
 270 חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם חֵם:

- with the priestly garments and the girdle that was worn,
 with the sacred crown and the ephod and precious stones,
 with the girdle and golden bells that surround it,
 with the fire and the incense, and the censer, which
 the priest offered up,
 275 with the stones 'Perfect' and 'Luminous' on the High Priest's shoulders⁴³
 that were to be seen in the Holy of Holies,
 with the anointing of the High Priest, at whose consecration
 they intinct with blood his hand, foot and ear lobes. Exod 29:30
 In all the various sacrifices which he offered up
 280 Moses would make expiation for the Hebrews with
 the symbol that is in the blood,
 sprinkling blood for the wrongdoing of his people,
 so that the world might perceive that its Lord would
 make expiation for the earth with His very own blood.
 He spoke in symbols, but did not provide their explanations,
 for he was a stammerer, and not able to speak clearly. Exod 4:10
 285 It was for this reason that his stammer was kept,
 so that all that he spoke might be kept unexplained.
 Our Lord came and loosed the tongue of the stammering Moses,
 so now all his words can be understood with clarity.
 The stammer was removed from Moses' tongue,
 290 and all his words became as clear as day.
 Up till our Lord's time his speech was impeded from
 being explained,
 and all the matters he spoke of remained obscure:
 by these two things, the stammer and the veil, was the
 Hidden Mystery preserved,
 because the time had not yet come for it to be uttered.

⁴³ 'Luminous' and 'Perfect' are the rendering of the terms Urim and Thummim in the Peshitta at Exod 28:30.

حَلَّحَهُ فَمُلَا دَعَمُصُلَا وَصَسْرُم ٥٥:

حَصِّلَا قَدْ هَمَّهَا هَقْبَا هَقَا قَا مَصْتَلَا ❖

هَكَذَا هُمَا رَجُلَا يَوْمًا وَفَضَّحَهُ:

حُتُّوا ۝ حُلُّوا ۝ كُنُودُهُ ۝ وَصُولُهُ ۝ وَصُولُهُ ۝

حَقَّاقًا، مَعْلَمًا، رَؤُوفًا، وَكَأَنَّ صُلَّاقًا:

وَوُحَا وَفُهْمَدَا وَحُصْبَهْ مُعَقَّوْهَا مُهْلَمْتَهْ يِقَدْ ♦

حَصَّصْتُ لَهُ وَدُهُلًا وَحُلًا وَمَا وَمَصْبًى:

رُحِمَ حَبْصًا أَيْبًا ۚ وَرُحِمَ قَلْبًا وَابْنًا ۖ

حَقْدَهُ، وَحَتًّا، وَقُلًّا مَعْتَلِفٌ وَمَقْدٌ، هُوَ:

مَعَهَا حَازِرًا وَجِبْ مُنَا سَعًا كَلَّا حَتَّىٰ

كَمْحُلًا خَلًّا وَحَنَدًا حَقْدَةً وَمَا أَفْهَمَ:

وَنَزَّلْنَا الْحَبْلَ وَمِنْهُ حَبْلٌ مَمْنُونٌ ﴿١٠﴾

مَلَا مِلًّا وَلَا مِثْلًا هُوَ لَا فُتْنَةٌ لَهُ:

فَإِنَّمَا يَهْدِيهِ اللَّهُ لِمَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هَادٍ لِّمَن يَشَاءُ ۚ ﴿٢٢﴾

أَوْ مَهْلًا ۖ وَالْأَنْفَالُ حُنَّ ۖ قَامَةً:

وَبِهِدَايَتِهِ هَدَىٰ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِمَا يَصْلَحُ لَهُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِنَا ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ

مِنْ أَلْفٍ فَعَلَ كَعَمِهِ وَقَامًا مَدْعَا:

١٥٠ | مَعْلَقَةُ قُلَيْبٍ مَلِكِ مَدْيَنَ

أَعَدُّ مَلَكًا كُنْ هُوَ قَائِمًا مَعَ خَلْقِهِ:

وَاللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ ذَكِيٌّ ۝

بِبَعْضِ الْخَيْرِ، سَيُنْزِلُ عَلَيْكَ مِثْقَالَ حَبِّ خَمْصَةٍ قَدُومًا:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّهْدِي اللَّهُ فَعَلَتْ حَسَنَاتٍ مَّا لَمْ يَكُن لَهَا فَاوِيَةٌ وَنُفِيَ عَنْهَا أَلْعَازِلُ الْعَاقِلِينَ

قَامَ هَمِيفٌ يُحَادِّثُكُمْ نَعْدَاؤُكُمْ وَهَمِي:

اَوْ اَصْعَدُ وَلَا مَعِيَ رَحْمَةٌ وَتَعْلَمُكَ ۝۱۰۱

THE RADIANCE ON MOSES' FACE

- 295 Moses asked to see the Father, since he had perceived Exod
33:18ff
that after a time His Son would reveal Himself to the
world;
the Father showed him the back of His face, to teach Exod 33:23
him
that the Son would be manifested in human guise.
The Eternal Being⁴⁴ made Himself a 'front' and a Exod 33:23
'back' so that Moses might know
- 300 that the earth would behold his Only-Begotten with
human limbs.
The Father (took on) a 'back', and after a time His
Son (took on) a body,
so that the world might be assured that the latter was
the Child of the former.
Moses gazed upon Him, and the skin of his face Exod 34:35
shone out,
for the brightness of the Son rested upon the personi-
fication of prophecy.
- 305 This was the reason why that veil was required,
so that the Son of God might thereby be veiled from
onlookers.
It was He who spoke through Moses' mouth when he
spoke,
for He is the Word who provided every word for
prophecy:
without Him there is no word, no revelation
- 310 in the prophets, for He is the treasure store of proph-
ecy.

⁴⁴ *itya* as a term for the Father is already found in Ephrem, e.g. *Madroshe* on Faith 44:1; see Bou Mansour, *La pensée symbolique de saint Ephrem le syrien* (Kaslik, 1988), 161–2.

أَفَصِفْ مُدْعِمًا وَتَسْمِ الْأُلَا وَافِيَةً ۚ هَـ: 295

وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهَوْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهَوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهَوْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

مُؤْمِلًا مَحْصِلًا وَاحِبًا لَهُ أَلَمًا وَبُؤْسًا مُدْمِلًا:
وَحَدَّثَنَا سُرْمَةُ أَوْحَا كَسْبِيهِ ❖

300

حَصِّلُوا لَأُحَاكِمَ؛ رَحِمَا كَرِيمًا رَحِيمًا
بَعْدَ حَصْلِ إِيمَانِ مَحْبِلٍ وَهُوَ مُخْلِوًا ❖

مِنْ دِه مُدَعَا ۛ اَرَوَس دِه مُعَا ۛ اَقَقَس :
 وَّوَس دَا رَحْمَا عَا حَمَمُود ۛ حَمَمَا ۛ

305 مَعْلُومًا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْإِصْحَافِ هُمْ يُصَفُّونَ
وَلَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّهْدِي اللَّهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَضَلُّ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ هَوَايَا النَّاسِ كَافٍ بِمُضِلٍّ

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ:

- The brightness of the Father tabernacled⁴⁵ there on
the face
of that Levite, but the people were not worthy to be- cf. Exod 2:1
hold it:
with a veil, replete with symbols, was it covered up
from (the sight of) the Hebrews, those haters of
prophecy's symbols.
- 315 Prophecy bore the Son on her face,
but to preserve His honour, she was veiled from the
discontented.
When the Crucified One, the Groom of prophecy,
arrived,
He uncovered her face, and so her voice is raised in
the synagogue.
The Virgin's Son has removed the veil from the He-
brews
- 320 and now Moses stands revealed, clear and fluent in
speech;
the Physician⁴⁶ has arrived to loosen the stammerer's
tongue:
Moses' speech, which had formerly been halting, has
now been restored;
the stammerer is healed, just as Isaiah prophesied; Isa 35:6
his words are loud, and all can understand what he
says;
- 325 his tongue is loosened, and his face uncovered;
the mystery that had been hidden beneath the veil has
come out into the open.
The words of prophecy had all been like girls who are
betrothed,
hidden from onlookers by a veil;

⁴⁵ The verb *aggen*, used here, features in both Luke 1:35 and John 1:14 (whereas the Greek has two different verbs). For the origins and use of this verb, which at an early stage became a technical term to described divine activity, see my *Fire from Heaven*, chapters XI-XIII.

⁴⁶ A frequent title of Christ; see especially Murray, *Symbols*, 199–303, and for Ephrem's use of it, see Shemunkasho, *Theology of Healing*, 134–9; in Jacob, see Bou Mansour, *Théologie* II, 114–25, Kollampampil, *Salvation*, p.354 (with further references), and Puthupampil, *Mariological Thought*, 309–13.

يُحْمِلُهُ وَيُحْمِلُ لَيْسَ لَمْ يَحْمِلْ قَبْلَهُ قَبْلَهُ:
وَيَوْمَ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَسْمِعُونَ خَلْفَ لَكُمْ هَذَا يَوْمًا
تَحْمِلُهُمْ وَمَحْمِلًا يُؤْتِي مَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا:

مَنْ حَمَلْتُمْ هُنْتُ إِذَا وَبَحْتُمْ أَلَا
وَمَنْ بَحْتُمْ لِحَمَلِهِمْ كَحَمَلٍ خَلْفَ قَبْلِهِ قَبْلَهُ:
وَأَمَّا لِلْمَنْ مَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا مَنْ حَمَلْتُمْ هَذَا
فَبِإِيٍّ أَلَا رَحْمَةً مَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا:

كَلَّا كَذَبَ أَفْتَنَهُ يَوْمًا وَمَنْ مَحْمِلًا حَمَلْتُمْ هَذَا
حَمَلْتُمْ وَحَمَلْتُمْ هَذَا مَحْمِلًا مَحْمِلًا مَحْمِلًا:
يَوْمًا كَلَّا هَذَا مَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا تَحْمِلُهُمْ كَحَمَلْتُمْ
إِلَّا كَذَبَ أَمَّا وَحَمَلْتُمْ وَحَمَلْتُمْ فَعَلِي:

وَالْمَحْمِلُ كَذَبَ مَحْمِلًا وَمَحْمِلًا وَمَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا:
وَأَمَّا فَعَلِي قَالُوا أَمَّا وَحَمَلْتُمْ أَلَا كَذَبَ يَوْمًا:
وَمَحْمِلًا مَحْمِلًا هَذَا تَحْمِلُهُمْ مَحْمِلًا وَمَحْمِلًا
فَعَلِي كَحَمَلِهِ وَحَمَلْتُمْ أَفْتَنَهُ مَحْمِلًا:

وَيَوْمَ إِذَا وَحَمَلْتُمْ يَوْمًا أَمَّا مَحْمِلًا
مَحْمِلًا يَوْمًا تَحْمِلُهُمْ قَالُوا وَحَمَلْتُمْ:
تَحْمِلْتُمْ يَوْمًا مَحْمِلًا مَحْمِلًا مَحْمِلًا:

but now the Groom has come and uncovered their
 faces, and made them shine;
 330 no longer do the betrothed require that veil.

**THE BRIDEGROOM'S PIERCED SIDE:
 THE OVERTHROW OF SHEOL**

The wedding has taken place and the bride has entered the chamber:
 between her and the Groom the veil is no longer required.
 The Groom's side has been pierced, and from it the John 19:34
 bride has come out,
 fulfilling the depiction delineated by Adam and Eve; Gen 2:21ff
 335 for from the first he knew and delineated
 Adam and Eve in the likeness of the image of His
 Only-Begotten:
 He slept on the Cross as Adam had slept his deep Gen 2:21
 sleep;
 they pierced His side and from it there came forth the
 Daughter of Light—
 water and blood as an image of divine children John 19:34
 340 to be heirs to the Father who loves His Only-
 Begotten.
 Eve in prophecy is the mother of all that lives, Gen 3:20
 and what, if not baptism, is the mother of life?⁴⁷
 Adam's wife bears human bodies subject to death,
 but this virgin bears spiritual beings who live for ever.
 345 Adam's side gave birth to a woman who gives birth to
 mortals,
 while our Lord's to the Church who gives birth to
 immortals.
 In the crucifixion He completed the figures that had
 been depicted,
 and the Hidden Mystery that had been covered up
 revealed itself.

⁴⁷ For the Font, replacing Eve, as the 'mother of living beings/Life', see also Bedjan I, p.162, III, p.148 etc., and my *The Holy Spirit*, 111–3.

- 330
 لَأُؤْتِيَنَّكَ اللَّهُ حَكْمًا عَظِيمًا
 وَأَمَّا مَا كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِالْأَمْوَالِ
 الَّتِي كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِهَا عَلَى النَّاسِ
 فَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ مُدْتَبِعُونَ
 فَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ
 335
 وَأَمَّا مَا كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِالْأَمْوَالِ
 الَّتِي كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِهَا عَلَى النَّاسِ
 فَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ مُدْتَبِعُونَ
 فَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ
 340
 وَأَمَّا مَا كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِالْأَمْوَالِ
 الَّتِي كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِهَا عَلَى النَّاسِ
 فَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ مُدْتَبِعُونَ
 فَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ
 345
 وَأَمَّا مَا كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِالْأَمْوَالِ
 الَّتِي كُنْتَ تَصَدَّقُ بِهَا عَلَى النَّاسِ
 فَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ مُدْتَبِعُونَ
 فَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ

- They crucified Him on the high hill so that the gen-
tiles of the earth might gaze on Him
350 and be healed by Him of the bites from the foul de-
mons;
they placed Him like that (bronze) serpent which
Moses had raised up on high,
and the symbol of the serpent, which had been hid- Num 21:8–9
den, was explained.
Our Sovereign cried out in high-walled Sheol⁴⁸ Matt. 27:50–
1
which quaked and fell, like Jericho before the He- Josh 6
brews.
355 The world learnt why it was not Moses but Joshua
who brought them into the land of the Amorites to Josh 12:2
inherit it:
it was the name of Joshua (Jesus) which broke down
the walls, being a parable (showing)
that Jesus' voice overthrew Sheol when He cried out
there.
All that had been veiled He uncovered
360 at His crucifixion, and the earth, that had been in
darkness, became light.

PROPHECY AND VIRGINITY REJOICE

- That hidden Child who did not loose the seals of vir-
ginity at His birth
loosened the veil of prophecy at His crucifixion.
Joy of heart did He provide to both Prophecy and
Virginity,
for at His birth and at His crucifixion the two of them
shone out:
365 for Virginity He preserved intact, that she might not
be laid bare,
while Prophecy's face he uncovered, so that she might
not be veiled.
Since His birth did not tear that veil of Virginity
on His Cross He tore off that covering from Proph-
ecy.

⁴⁸ Jacob calls Sheol 'high-walled' elsewhere too, e.g. Bedjan II, p.450.

- 350 دُعَا أَمْعَه م وَنَعُوْه دَح حَقْمَلَا وَأُوْحَا:
 نَمْلَسَحْمَل دَح مَح تَعْمَلَا بِعَاوَا لِنْتَقَا
 أَس بَه مَعْمَا وَأُوْمَر مَعْمَلَا دَحْمَلَا مَعْمَه م:
 دَلَا قَعْم دَح إِيْوَر مَعْمَلَا وَمَحْمَل يُوْأ:
 مَلَا دَح مَلَا مَحْمَل مَعْمَلَا وَمَلَا مَعْمَلَا:
 355 هُوْحَا تَعْلَا أَس أُنْسَه مَبَر حَحْمَلَا
 مَح مَحْمَلَا حَمَل لَا مَعْمَلَا أَلَا تَعْمَلَا:
 أَلَا أُنْس تَاوَلَا أُوْحَا وَأَمْعَه مَلَا
 مَعْمَه يُوْه وَمَعْمَلَا أُوْأ يُوْأ مَعْمَلَا مَعْمَلَا:
 وَمَلَا وَمَعْمَلَا مَحْمَل مَعْمَلَا مَلَا وَمَلَا دَح
 حَحْمَلَا أُوْأ مَحْمَل وَمَحْمَل يُوْأ مَحْمَل أُنْس:
 360 دَرْمَعْمَلَا مَعْمَلَا أُوْأ أُوْأ وَمَعْمَلَا يُوْأ:
 مَحْمَلَا مَعْمَلَا وَلَا مَحْمَلَا حَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا:
 مَحْمَلَا مَعْمَلَا وَمَحْمَلَا دَرْمَعْمَلَا
 مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا:
 365 مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا:
 مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا:
 مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا مَحْمَلَا:

- He preserved youth in the ranks of virginity
 370 while He lightened the burden that old age was carrying.
 The young Mary continued on in her virginity,
 while the aged Moses cast off the covering that had
 proved heavy.
 The Virgin rejoiced that He had preserved her virginity,
 the prophet too rejoiced that He had removed from
 him the veil.
 375 He preserved virginity's beauty, leaving it untouched,
 He revealed prophecy's beauty that had been covered
 up.
 Moses leaps with joy⁴⁹ for He has revealed his beauty
 that had been veiled;
 Mary exults in her virginity that has not been destroyed.
 The girl and the aged man both have acquired their
 true beauty
 380 through the Son of God who Himself is the beauty of
 all who are beautiful.
 The great prophet bore Him on his face beneath the
 veil,
 Mary bore Him within the gates of (her) virginity.
 At His birth He left the seals unbroken,
 at His crucifixion He removed the veils from the
 prophets.
 385 He revealed their words, and the earth was illumined
 at their revelation;
 their symbols shone out and all now possess their explanations.

THE UNNECESSARY LAMP AT MIDDAY⁵⁰

The Hebrew people who read the Old Testament on
 Sabbaths

⁴⁹ Jacob perhaps deliberately reflects Luke 1:41, where the verb is used of John the Baptism in his mother's womb when she meets Mary, pregnant with Christ.

⁵⁰ For the following, there are several similarities with Albert, *Juifs*, VII, lines 431–508.

- كَلِمَةً أَلْهَيْتُ بِهِ قُلُوبًا وَكَذَلِكَ أَلْهَى:
- وَمَنْ هُوَ أَلْهَى أَمَّا تَعْمَلُ وَهَلْ تَعْمَلُ ۖ
- لَيْسَ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ مَعَهُ كَذَلِكَ أَلْهَى:
- وَهُوَ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ مَعَهُ أَلْهَى وَتَعْمَلُ ۖ
- كَذَلِكَ أَلْهَى تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ كَذَلِكَ أَلْهَى:
- تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ أَلْهَى:
- أَوْفَى تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ أَلْهَى تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ:
- تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ ۖ
- وَأَنْ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ ۖ
- وَهُوَ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ لَا أَلْهَى ۖ
- لَيْسَ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ:
- حَذِ كَذَلِكَ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ ۖ
- تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ:
- لَيْسَ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ ۖ
- تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ أَوْفَى تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ:
- وَمَنْ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ ۖ
- لَا تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ:
- وَيْسَ أَوْفَى تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ ۖ
- حَذِ تَعْمَلُ وَتَعْمَلُ تَعْمَلُ:

still is not aware that the veil has been removed:
 up to now the veil is still on their faces 2 Cor 3:14
 390 and prophecy's beauty is hidden from them.
 They read Moses, but Moses is hidden from the He- 2 Cor 3:15
 brews,
 and, without the Crucified One, that veil is not re-
 moved.
 As long as they feel hatred for the Son who was cruci-
 fied on Golgotha
 they are fittingly kept blind beneath the veil of Moses.
 395 Their heart is darkened, being covered by that veil,
 and they grope after the symbols and their explana-
 tions as if it was night;
 because their heart is not illumined by the Sun of Mal 4:2
 righteousness,
 they do not understand how to read the prophets with
 clarity;
 they do not examine the image of the Son that exists
 in the Scriptures,
 400 for He is concealed from them with a veil and so they
 do not see Him.
 They slaughter the (Passover) lamb, and because it has
 this veil
 the poor wretches think that the lamb has rescued
 them from the Egyptians.
 They depict the cross of blood clearly on their doors, Exod 12:7
 yet their eyes are veiled so that they fail to see who it
 is that they depict.
 405 They burn the heifer as a means of purification for the Num 19:5
 people,
 but fail to see in it all the colours of the Crucifixion.⁵¹
 O Jew,⁵² remove the veil from your mind,
 and look upon Moses, on whose face Christ is de-
 picted;
 the eyes of your soul are deliberately closed,

⁵¹ Similarly in his Homily on the Red Heifer, Bedjan III, p.250, line 19.

⁵² Jacob likewise addresses a supposed Jewish reader directly in Albert, *Juifs*, I, line 137; II, line 95; III, lines 149, 269, 282 etc.

حَبِّمَا لَا فِجْءٍ وَلَا مَفْلا كُنْ هُ مَعْقَلَا
حَبِّمَا كُنْ هُ مَعْقَلَا مُصْطَلَا حَاقَّةً:

390 وَصَفَّ يَدَيْهِ عَلَيْهِ سَلَامٌ وَبَشِّرْهُ بِالْإِ

حَقَّعَهَا مُنَا هَمَّعَهَا مَصَّفَ مَحَّحَهَا حُحَّحَهَا:
هَلْ لَا اَصْفَا هَلْ اَصْفَا لَا اَصْفَا حَلَّحَهَا

مُعَا، وَمُعَا لَهُ كَحَا، وَرَمَفَ مَلَا مَجْعَدًا:
أَسَدٌ مَعَهُ مَعَهُ، وَمُعَا مَصْفُوعٌ مَعَهُ هُكْدَا،

395 سَمِعَ رَجُلٌ مِّنَ الْوَلَدِ وَهُوَ مُبْعِدٌ:

هَآءُ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ اَوْ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ اَوْ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ
هَآءُ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ اَوْ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ اَوْ اِسْمٌ بِحَالٍ مُّطْلَقٍ

لَا مَحْصَدَ لَهَا نَمَّا بَحْتًا نَعْمًا ؕ

400 وَحَقُّهُمَا مِصْفٌ مِّنْهُ هَلَا مَرًا ۚ

مُلَّا أَمَّا مَعْلَا وَأَسْ حَهْ أَسْمَا:
مُحْدَ وَهْمَا وَأَمَّا فَهَمْ مَحْمُومًا

وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهِ إِلَّا الْأَقَلُّ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهِ إِلَّا الْأَقَلُّ مِنَ النَّاسِ

405 حُجَّاجًا مَعَهُمْ وَحَدَّثَنَا وَحَدَّثَنَا وَحَدَّثَنَا:

هَلَا سَأُوذُنْ وَبُكَاهُ وَاصْفَالُ ۝۱۰
أَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ الْهَدَىٰ هَدًى عَظِيمًا ۝۱۱

هَمْوَ دَه حَضْعَا وَرِن دَه مَعْسَا كَلَا فَنَرُوْهُ ۞
خَتَا وَنَعْمَ اَسْتَبْ كَح مَح رَحْمُ:

- 410 and so you cannot see the beauties in a spiritual way.
 It is night for you and you do not perceive
 that the Sun has arisen from Golgotha, giving light to
 all creation.
 Up till the Crucified One the entire world was as it
 were in night
 though the Law was like a torch in the dark,
 415 and the whole earth sought out the light of that Law
 just as the eye searches out for a lamp in the dark.
 By day, neither torch nor lamp are needed
 by the eye, since there is the sun which illuminates all.
 The Hebrew resembles a man whose door is closed
 420 and, with his lamp lit, he is not aware that the sun is
 up;⁵³
 he has not opened his door to see creation filled with
 light
 and to be illumined by the sun along with many oth-
 ers, without any need for a lamp.
 The windows of his soul⁵⁴ are closed to understanding
 and so he looks for a small lamp in the middle of the
 day.
 425 O Jew, the sun has arisen in the heights
 and the earth, sea, the world and the air are filled with
 it;
 open your door and receive light from the day
 and put away your lamp which was only needed by
 night.
 Why are you become a laughing stock⁵⁵ in the world
 that is filled with light,
 430 you (alone) being far from the daylight, despite its
 being with you?
 The time for lamps and torches is at an end,
 for the sun's rising has removed and put them all away.
 Moses' Lord has come into the world in bodily form,

⁵³ Albert, *Juifs*, VII, line 501, is very similar.

⁵⁴ The metaphor, perhaps suggested by 1 Tim. 3:5, where the Peshitta has *bayta d-naphsheh*, is also found in Ephrem, *Madroshe* on the Church 38:8.

⁵⁵ Similarly Albert, *Juifs*, VII, lines 478, 506.

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410 هَلَا حَمَصُ أَیْ لَمَّا مَعَا وَهَمُ نَأْ
 حَبْ كَلَّا يَهْ حَبْ هَبْ هَمَّ حَمَصًا مَحْ كَلَّهْ كَلَّا
 لَا فَكَّعًا دَهْ وَهَمًا مَعَا وَكَلَّهْ دَهْ
 حَبَّعًا رَمَصًا أَمَّ كَلَّا يَهْ أَوْحًا وَكَلَّهْ
 نَعْمُهُ وَهْ أَمَّ كَمَصَّعًا حَهْ شَعْمُهُ
 415 دَحْمًا يَهْ كَلَّهْ أَوْحًا كَلَّهْ وَهْ نَعْمُهُ
 أَصْعًا وَحْمًا حَمَّا عَمَّ حَهْ شَعْمُهُ
 حَامِصًا وَهْ أَمَّا عَمَّا هَلَا كَمَصَّعًا
 حَمَّا مَعَمَّ وَهْ هَمَّ حَمَصًا وَكَلَّهْ وَهْ دَهْ
 حَمَّا وَهْ وَحَّا حَمَّحًا وَهَمَّ أَوْحَهْ
 420 هَمَّ دَهْ عَمَّا هَمَّ حَمَصًا هَلَا أَوْحَهْ دَهْ
 لَا فَكَّعًا وَهَمَّ وَهَمًا وَكَلَّهْ وَهَمَّ
 هَلَا عَمَّا حَمَصًا وَهَمَّ حَمَّحًا
 اِسْتَبَّ اِسْتَبَّ قَقَا وَنَعْمُهُ مَحْ شَعْمُهُ
 حَبَّعًا حَمَّا عَمَّا رَمَّعًا حَهْ اِسْتَبَّ
 425 أَوْحَهْ وَهَمَّ وَهَمَّ دَهْ حَمَصًا حَمَّ وَهَمًا
 هَمَّ دَهْ أَوْحًا هَمَّ حَمَصًا هَلَا
 فَكَّعًا حَبْ أَوْحَهْ هَمَّ حَبْ وَهَمًا مَحْ اِسْتَبَّ
 هَلَّا عَمَّا وَهَمَّ حَمَّا لَا مَعَمَّ وَهَمًا
 حَمَّا حَبَّ أَیْ كَمَصَّعًا حَمَّحًا وَهَمًا
 430 هَلَّا وَهَمَّ أَیْ مَحْ اِسْتَبَّ حَبْ حَمَّ وَهَمَّ
 حَمَّ دَهْ رَمَّ وَهَمَّ وَهَمًا هَلَّا وَهَمَّ
 وَهَمَّ وَهَمَّ اِحْمَّ مَحَّ وَهَمَّ وَهَمَّ
 اِلَّا دَهْ حَمَّحًا وَهَمَّ وَهَمًا فَكَّعًا

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- and, instead of Moses, it is He who informs the world.
 435 While it was night the prophets placed a torch on
 earth
 to show the way by which the world might reach day-
 light,
 but when the great Sun of Righteousness arrived, Mal 4:2
 He removed them from a service for which they were
 no longer fitted:
 He had established them, not for daytime, but for the
 night,
 440 and when night ended, He honoured them in their
 proper places.
 For daytime the sun is needed, with its strong light
 which drives darkness from every comer.
 Moses is now honoured for his service,
 for the Son of God took the towel, ready to serve. John 13:4
 445 O Hebrew,⁵⁶ put away your lamp that provides your
 light,
 for the daylight is spread over the mountains at His
 great Epiphany.
 The entire earth is filled with the light of the great
 Sun.
 Open your doors, for Him to enter in and give you
 light and joy;
 that veil of Moses has been removed.
 450 Gaze upon him and see how he stands uncovered, as
 someone luminous,
 the man and his deeds depicting the Son of God.
 Why is it you do not see the beauty that is clear as
 day?
 Remove that veil that is laid upon your heart⁵⁷
 and you will see the exalted beauties of prophecy.
 455 Consider why that veil was required:
 Moses took it to cover the symbols within it.

⁵⁶ Normally Jacob will use 'Hebrew' for the Israelites, but 'Jew' for contemporary Jews.

⁵⁷ Similarly in the context of Moses' veil, Macarian Homilies (ed. Berthold), 34:19.

- 435 **سَلَفُ قُدَمَاءِ هُوَ مَضَلٌّ ذَا حُلُلٍ مَتَحَمِّمٌ**
فَبِ كَلْبٍ يَوْمًا بَحْتًا عُنُكًا هُفْهَ حُنْ كَاوُحًا:
سَقَمَ أَوْهَمًا حُلُلًا وَبَلًا زَبِ أَمُصَمًا
هَبِ أَلَا هُوَ هُصَمًا وَحَا وَوُفَعَال:
حَدَّ أَنْفٍ مَعَ أَمُصَمًا وَكَلَّ وَحَدَّ هُوَ
كَه لَأَمُصَمًا أَلَا حَلَّلْنَا أَلَامَ أَنْفٍ:
 440 **هَوَمَلِي كَلْبًا مَقَى أَنْفٍ كَاهُتَتَهُ**
كَه لَأَمُصَمًا هُصَمًا سَعَبَ حَرَمَ وَسَلَا:
وَحَسَمَهُمَا كَلَّه لُحُو مَعَ قَتَلَا
أَلَامَقَ ذَا قُدَمَاءِ مَضَلٍّ مَعَ أَمُصَمًا:
وَدَى كَلَّهَا عَمَّا هَبَّهَمَا كَصَمُصَمُهُ
 445 **أَه حَبْنًا خَلَا عُنُكٍ وَصَدَّ وَوَهَا كَب:**
وَهَا أَمُصَمًا فَمَسَ حَا لُحُو حَبَسَهُ وَحَا:
أَوْحَا كَلَّه مَحَلْنَا نَهَمًا وَهَمَمًا وَحَا:
فَلَمَسَ كَلَّه أَوْحَسَ دَلَا مَصَدَّ وَهَسَبًا كَب
أَمَلَمَلَا كَلَّه هُوَ هَمَمَقَه وَهَمَمًا مَصَدَّ:
 450 **مَهَوَ كَلَّه هَسَمَ وَحَلَا هَمَامَ أَسِ تَهَمًا:**
حَدَى كَلَّه نَاوُ حَحَا هَحْتَبَاه:
حَصَمَ لَا مَرَمَ هَمَفَا وَحَلَا أَسِ أَمُصَمًا
هَدَمَ مَعَ كَحَبِ هُوَ أَسَمَلًا وَحَدَّ هُوَ وَهَمَلَا:
هَمَا مَرَا أَيْدِ هَمَفَتَمَ وَهَمَا وَحَدَّ هُوَ
 455 **هَمَمَ مَضَلَّ حَصَمَ أَلَامَسَ هُوَ هَمَمَلَا:**
وَحَا وَبَلَمَلَا لُورَا حَكَمَدَه هَمَلَدَه قُدَمَاءِ

He who recognizes that prophecy is veiled
also recognizes that it has been uncovered in the Son
of God,
the Hidden Mystery who has revealed Himself to the
world in the flesh.

460 Blessed is He who has come and uncovered the
prophets who had been veiled!

The end

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